



# Autumn Leaves: Love 'Em and Leave 'Em



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# The Problem

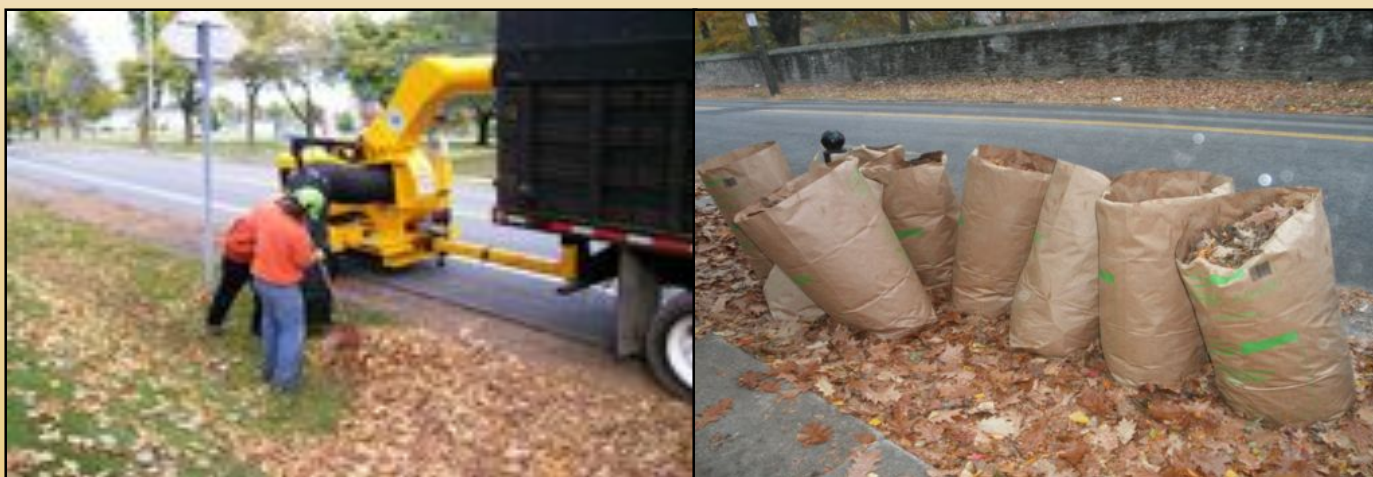


- Unsafe Driving Conditions
- Runoff Pollution of Waterways
- Cost of Collection & Removal
- Waste of Valuable Organic Resource



# Collection and disposal of leaves - annual costs:

- Irvington - up to \$130,000
- Tarrytown - estimated \$175,000
- Greenburgh - estimated \$300k - \$400k
- Westchester County - estimated \$4,000,000





# LELE Initiative

**Your Leaves: Love ‘Em And Leave ‘Em**

*“It’s Green and It Makes Cents.”*

Target audiences:

- Homeowners
- Landscapers
- Municipal & County Officials
- School Districts
- Churches, Hospitals, Condos, Co-ops
- Commercial Properties





# **LELE Initiative**

## **Why?**

**Mulching-in-place saves time & money for:**

- Landscaping businesses
- Homeowners
- Large-scale properties such as schools, churches, condos, hospitals, office parks
- Municipalities & County



# LELE Initiative

## Why?

Removing leaves from waste stream and utilizing as an locally-generated resource **reduces negative impacts:**

- It's good for the environment.
- It's good for lawns, parks and playing fields.
- It is a sustainable / green practice.



# Environmental Benefits of Leaf Mulching

- Returns much-needed **nutrients** to lawn, landscape beds and/or wooded areas in a slow-release organic form.
- Reduces or eliminates the need for **fertilizers** and **commercial mulch**.
- **Helps soil retain moisture**, reducing the need for watering in dry spells and **reduces impacts** of stormwater runoff.
- **Protects landscape beds** over the winter & helps cool root zones in the summer.
- **Builds better soil** by lightening clay soils & giving fluff to sandy soils.
- **Increases biological activity** of earthworms, microbes, fungi & other beneficial soil organisms.
- Combine with “**grass cycling**” for 3 season benefits.



# Reduces Reliance on the “Blow & Blow” Approach



- Blowing of leaves off landscape beds **kills the top soil**, removing leaf duff, top dirt and beneficial organisms.
- Blowing leaves leads to unnecessary **air pollution** and aggravation of certain health conditions including **asthma** and **allergies**.
- Blowing & “rangling” leaves into large curbside piles creates **noise pollution** and annoys neighbors.





# How? Simply Leave The Leaves On Your Property

- Shred them with a mulching mower and leave them in place on **lawn areas**.
- Shred them and use as **mulch** on borders, flower beds and tree rings.
- Leave them alone in **wooded areas**.
- **Compost** them in a pile or compost bin (with or without pre-shredding).



# Tools of the Trade

- Mulching mower (with *"Gator" blades & Vulcher*)
- Leaf mulcher/chipper
- Leaf vacuum/shredder
- Mother Nature





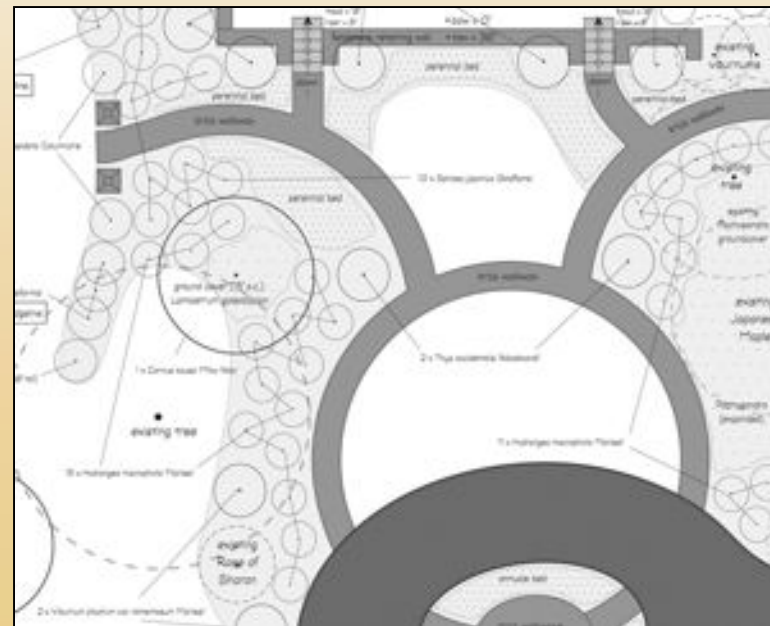
# Yes, But: Site Issues



- Not enough lawn
- Hardscape areas
- Landscape beds
- Wooded areas
- Too many leaves?  
*(reduction up to 10:1  
in volume)*
- >80% of properties!



- Landscape Architects
- Landscape Designers
- Landscapers
- Homeowners
- Planning Boards







# Does It Work?



"I started shredding leaves and leaving them on my clients' properties. The lawns look healthier. The soil is better. I save time and money not having to blow, vacuum, dump leaves.

It's a no-brainer! Even my father (who's had his own landscaping company for a good many years) is convinced. He's adopting the practice, too."

- Anthony Vulpone, Vulpone Landscape & Lawn Maintenance



## **Our Leaves: Love 'Em And Leave 'Em**

For more information and "how to" -> [www.irvingtonny.gov/green](http://www.irvingtonny.gov/green)

Paid for by the Irvington Green Policy Task Force with a Clean Air, Cool Planet grant.





# Does It Work?



“We’ve been mulching-in-place for the last three or four years. Our playing fields at Memorial Park show improved turf that holds up to hard play, withstands drought better and drains faster after a storm. For the first time, we’re able to grow nice grass in the picnic area under the Oak trees at Matthiessen Park.”

*- Chris DePaoli, Foreman Irvington Parks Dept.*



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# Does It Work?



"I'm so happy that my lawn is being cared for in a sustainable way. We each make big and small choices that affect the environment and this is a great way to contribute - plus, my lawn looks beautiful!"

*- Eileen Fisher  
Irvington Resident*



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# Does It Work?



"I have always believed in the 'power of mulching' my leaves onto my lawn, whether I was mowing myself or my landscaper was doing it for me. As the Mayor of Irvington, I am encouraging all resident to adopt this environmentally sound and fiscally responsible approach to fall leaf management.

The more people that do so, the less money the Village will spend to collect leaves. If you or your landscaper are not convinced that leaf mulching works, call me!"

*- Brian Smith, Mayor of Irvington*



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# Does It Work?



- **Speak with other landscapers for firsthand testimony**
- **“Model properties” in the neighborhood**
  - Watch for LELE yard signs that help increase public awareness.
- **Trial area on your property**
  - See for yourself and show the results to clients.
- **Ongoing scientific research**
  - Cornell Cooperative Extension & Univ. of Michigan studies.
- **Budget monitoring of seasonal time & cost savings**



# **LELE Initiative**

## **Why Not?**

It's simple to learn and implement.

It doesn't require expensive tools.

It saves you time & money.





# LELE Toolkit – Resource Files

- **Testimonials, articles and sample letters**
- **Logo files (jpgs):** different files with variations of logo
- **Yard Sign (.pdf):** 2 sizes (12" x 18", 18" x 24")
- **"HOW TO" Pocket Guide (.pdf):** 2 sided bi-lingual
- **LELE Bumper Sticker (.pdf)**
- **YOU-TUBE Videos:**
  - **Short Demo Videos & Landscaper Interviews**  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/IrvingtonGPTF>
  - **COC Landscaper Training**  
<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL61ED5881E50CC8D0>



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# LELE Homepage



**LEAVES:  
WE LOVE 'EM  
AND LEAVE 'EM**  
**Leaf Recycling  
In Progress**

**Watch This Yard - No Leaves  
Leave the Property** 

*See: <http://www.irvingtonny.gov/green>*

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